

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15
AID-05 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-01 TRSE-00 XMB-04 OPIC-06
CIEP-02 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 /101 W
-----160114Z 052606 /67

R 151745Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2796
INFO AMCONSUL MILAN
AMCONSUL NAPLES

UNCLAS ROME 2514

E.O. 11652 N/A
TAGS: PINT, IT
SUBJ: ANDREOTTI INTERVIEW IN /LA DISCUSSIONE/

REF: ROME 2340

/SUMMARY/: IN AN INTERVIEW IN THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT WEEKLY, /LA DISCUSSIONE/, PRIME MINISTER ANDREOTTI STATED THAT THE PCI HAD FOLLOWED A RESPONSIBLE PATH IN SUPPORTING THE /MONOCOLORE/ AND WAS WISE NOT TO CONFRONT FOR THE MOMENT THE PROBLEM OF IDEOLOGICAL REVISION. HE ALSO EXPRESSED HIS BELIEF THAT THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT COULD SURVIVE UNTIL SPRING 1978, UNLESS A PARTICULAR CRISIS SHOULD PROVOKE A DETERIORATION OF THE SITUATION.

/END SUMMARY/.

1. DEFENDING THE GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSED DECREE TO REDUCE THE COST OF LABOR IN AN INTERVIEW IN THE LATEST ISSUE OF /LA DISCUSSIONE/, ANDREOTTI STATED THAT HE BELIEVED TALK OF ANTICIPATED ELECTIONS (PROMPTED BY THE CONTROVERSIAL DECREE - REFTEL) DID NOT COME FROM THE PCI, WHICH HAD UNCLASSIFIED

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FOLLOWED A RESPONSIBLE PATH, AS HAD THE OTHER PARTIES, IN UNDERSTANDING THAT IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO CONSTRUCT ITS POLITICAL FORTUNES ON THE RUIN OF THE COUNTRY. COMMENTING UPON INTERNAL REVISION WITHIN THE PCI, ANDREOTTI SAID THE COMMUNIST LEADERS WERE WISE NOT TO CONFRONT FOR THE MOMENT THE PROBLEM OF IDEOLOGICAL REVISION, BUT TO INSTEAD CONCENTRATE ON PRACTICAL MATTERS. ANDREOTTI

CONTINUED, HOWEVER, THAT THE NEED FOR COHERENCE AND COMPATIBILITY WITH EFFECTIVE PLURALISM WILL SOONER OR LATER FORCE THE PCI TO FACE THE PROBLEM OF IDEOLOGICAL REVISION OF MARXISM. ANDREOTTI CHARACTERIZED THE FIRST POPULARLY-ELECTED EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, WHICH WILL BE CONVENED IN SPRING 1978, AS "A HIGHLY RELEVANT TEST" FOR THE COMMUNISTS TO PROVE THEIR EUROPEAN ORIENTATION, A TEST IN WHICH THE PCI WILL HAVE THE OPTION OF EITHER CONFIRMING THIS ORIENTATION, WHICH WOULD LEAD THEM INTO DIFFERENCES WITH OTHER EUROPEAN COMMUNIST PARTIES (SUCH AS THE FRENCH), OR THE PCI WILL FALL INTO GRAVE CONTRADICTIONS. HE HOPE THAT BELINGUER WOULD BE ABLE TO REALLY ACCOMPLISH THIS "OPTING" FOR EUROPE. (NOTE: *L'UNITA*, IN REPORTING THIS EXCERPT, ASID THAT IT WAS DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND WHAT ANDREOTTI MEANT BY THIS MYSTERIOUS PHRASE, SINCE THE PCI HAD FOR SOME TIME MADE CLEAR ITS POSITION ON EUROPEAN PROBLEMS.)

2. IN RESPONSE TO THE INTERVIEWER'S QUESTION OF WHETHER THE *MONOCOLORE* COULD SURVIVE UNTIL THE TIME OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, ANDREOTTI RESPONDED AFFIRMATIVELY, ALTHOUGH HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT A PARTICULAR CRISIS MIGHT PROVOKE A DETERIORATION IN THE OVERALL ITALIAN SITUATION. EARLIER IN THE INTERVIEW HE REFUSED TO SPECULATE UPON A POSSIBLE SUCCESSOR TO HIS POSITION, BUT OBSERVED THAT THE REASONS FOR WHICH THE *MONOCOLORE* HAD BEEN ALLOWED TO COME INTO EXISTENCE THROUGH THE VOTES OF CONFIDENCE OR ABSTENTION LAST JULY WERE STILL VALID, AND THAT THE POLICY WHICH THE GOVERNMENT HAD FOLLOWED SINCE THAT TIME MUST BE JUDGED IN A POSITIVE LIGHT. BEAUDRY

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Disposition Comment:
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Disposition Event:
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